

State of Idaho
Department of Administration
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News Release

Contact: Pat Wynn, pat.wynn@adm.idaho.gov
208.332.1827

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Restoration and Expansion of Idaho State Capitol Will Ensure Building History - Legacy, Space Needs for Future Generations

Governor Dirk Kempthorne made the restoration of Idaho's State Capitol building a priority during his administrations, and the Idaho Legislature this month gave approval to a resolution restating its support to preserve Idaho's Statehouse and provide additional space for future generations of Idahoans.

Following State Senate passage March 15 of [House Concurrent Resolution 47](#), lawmakers requested the Idaho Capitol Commission to modify its Master Plan providing for continued restoration of the Capitol; and authorized expansion of the building with the construction of two, underground wings adding a combined 100,000 square feet of much needed office and hearing room space.

Total estimated cost for the restoration and expansion, set to begin in the spring of 2007 following the 2007 Legislative Session, is **\$114 million**. Construction of the two, 2-story underground wings, comprises \$39.5 million of the total cost, and also includes placement of modern high-speed elevators to serve the Capitol Building and each new wing. The 30-month project timeline calls for completion prior to the 2010 Legislative Session.

Construction of Idaho's Capitol began in 1905 and was completed in 1920. The building currently has 193,000 sq. ft. of gross space -- 111,632 sq. ft. useable. As presently configured, the Statehouse does not allow for expansion of hearing rooms that are extremely overcrowded. A Legislative Restoration Task Force studied various space/addition proposals, and toured the [Texas State Capitol](#) to study underground facilities there. Idaho design considerations meet national historic guidelines and retain the recently restored east and west stairs/grand entries, and overall visual impact of Idaho's Statehouse.

The current restoration effort initially began in 2001 and was scheduled to be completed in time for the Capitol's 100th Birthday Commemoration in July of 2005, but was put on hold due to state budget shortfalls in 2002. Kempthorne in his 2006 State of the State Address cited escalating construction costs and the urgent need to move ahead with the project.

"The passage of HCR 47 represents a historical milestone for the State of Idaho and a significant accomplishment by **Governor Dirk Kempthorne** and the **58th Idaho Legislature**," said Pam Ahrens, Director of the Department of Administration, which oversees restoration construction. "Not only will this effort require the dedicated expertise of our public works team, but all Idahoans will be impacted in some way, whether they're working as contractors or laborers on the construction, involved in the Idaho Capitol Commission's community activities, or by witnessing this unique and historic project unfold," she added.

During the construction period, the **2008 and 2009 Legislative Sessions** will be held in the former Ada County Courthouse located adjacent to the Capitol. The facility was acquired by the state several years ago and has large courtrooms that could meet assembly needs. Offices will be temporarily relocated to nearby state buildings and from other leased sources if needed. Restoration costs will be paid for from extra cigarette taxes the Idaho Legislature made permanent in the 2005 Legislative Session.

Additional resources: www.capitolcommission.idaho.gov www.adm.idaho.gov